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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 CHIANG MAI 000171

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: CHIANG MAI ENERGY CONSERVATION STILL IN FIRST GEAR

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11. Summary: Residents of Chiang Mai Province spend heavily on energy, much of it on transportation. Despite efforts to encourage public sec
12. As fuel prices rise and the central government threatens drastic measures to curb energy use, Chiang Mai is beginning to take a look at it averages 27% of per capita income. Tipping its hat to Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's energy saving campaign, the city of Chiang Mai has hung a banner on the municipal office across from the Consulat
13. Chiang Mai Mayor Boonlert Buranupakorn is also pushing ahead efforts to put new public buses on the streets in a city that has been withou
14. After repeated delays, buses are scheduled to appear on Chiang Mai streets in late July. The municipal government has reclaimed three out
15. The hold up in Chiang Mai's attempt to re-introduce public bus service is particularly frustrating in light of the critical role that trar According to a "Study of Appropriate Mass Transit Network for Chiang Mai Urban Area" conducted by Chiang Mai University (CMU), the province has
16. Both the local and central authorities are touting bio-fuel production as one measure to address the high cost of transportation. On June Despite much talk about this plan - also hyped as a way to save Chiang Mai consumers from eating bananas fried in old oil - the Deputy Mayor cc
17. In addition to local government measures to reduce energy consumption, the Ministry of Energy promotes conservation through its Chiang Mai
18. Although encouraging, the success of the REO program hardly makes a dent in Chiang Mai's problem. Public sector energy consumption compri
19. Representatives from local businesses claim that they are indeed proactive on the energy issue. Chiang Mai Federation of Thai Industries

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reduction goal set by the National FTI and Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak last April, pointing out that businesses have to reduce er Narong highlighted Chamber efforts to decrease energy use, including distributing pamphlets of energy saving tips to member businesses and lobb

110. Comment: Chiang Mai's efforts to reduce energy use are exceptionally modest in light of the daily headlines about rising oil prices. Wh Bio-fuels are unlikely to offer any cost advantage to consumers in the foreseeable future while the introduction of the new city bus service ha

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